

CLAIMS

We claim:

5 1. A filtering apparatus comprising a pressure vessel having a feed connection and a filtrate connection, and at least one capillary filtration membrane module, said membrane module having a length and comprising an inlet coupled with the feed connection, an outlet coupled with the filtrate connection, and a filter housing defining a membrane compartment accommodating a bundle of capillary filtration membranes, and said capillary filtration membranes being cased at both ends of the membrane module in membrane holders, wherein at least one of the membrane modules comprises at least one feed-through conduit extending substantially in the longitudinal direction throughout the length of the membrane module, wherein walls of said feed-through conduit comprise an impermeable material, and wherein filtration flow occurs radially from inside each capillary filtration membrane to outside each said capillary filtration membrane.

10 2. A filtering apparatus according to claim 1 wherein at least one of said feed-through conduits comprises a pipe located inside the membrane compartment.

15 3. A filtering apparatus according to claim 1 additionally comprising a feed-through conduit annularly surrounding the membrane compartment.

20 4. A filtering apparatus according to claim 1, comprising a plurality of membrane modules in fluid serial connection.

5. A filtering apparatus according to claim 3 wherein walls of the annular feed-through conduit are formed by the filter housing and a wall of the pressure vessel.

5 6. A filtering apparatus according to claim 5 additionally comprising spacers between the wall of the pressure vessel and the filter housing.

7. A filtering apparatus according to claim 1 wherein walls of said feed-through conduit comprise a rigid material with a smooth surface.

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